

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 12, line 18 as set forth below.

One alternative method for linking item descriptions includes encrypting the other items' information including descriptions, phrases, and titles. In one method, the encrypted information is inserted into an URL that takes the [seller]user to an auxiliary site at which a client-side program, such as a Java script program, runs to decrypt the other item descriptions and present the [seller]user with a selection list in readable text. Making a selection causes the [seller]user to return to the search engine of the auction site which will find and display the item selected. Instead of residing on an auxiliary site, the program for [de-encrypting]decrypting the keyword information can reside at the auction site, or even in the item description itself in the case of self-decryption. If the auction site encrypts and decrypts the other item information, there is no need to leave the auction site. The auction site encrypts the other item description data to prevent the auction site search engine from interfered with during a search for an item selected by the user. When the item requested by the user is found, the encrypted data in the item description of the found item is found automatically decrypted and presented to the user, giving the user the choice of selecting the other items for searches.

Please amend the paragraph starting at page 14, line 3 as set forth below.

Yet still another alternative method for linking item descriptions includes placing a pointer, such as an URL inside the item description, where the pointer is used to access an auxiliary host connected to the Internet. When a Web page containing the item description having the pointer is accessed by the potential bidder's browser (or equivalent interpreter), the pointer accesses the auxiliary host to produce an auxiliary list of keywords, item descriptions and/or item numbers that represent all of the currently active [actions]auctions for the sellers items and displays the list inside the auction description. The list from the auxiliary host can also be displayed in a pop-up window generated when the URL is selected and displayed over the Web page containing the item description from the auction site.

In the Claims:

Please amend the claims as indicated below.

- 17. (Cancelled)
- 18. (Cancelled)
- 19. (Cancelled)
- 20. (Cancelled)
- 21. (Cancelled)
- 22. (Cancelled)
- 23. (Cancelled)
- 24. (Cancelled)
- 25. (Cancelled)
- 26. (Cancelled)
- 27. (Cancelled)

Please add the following new claims.

- 1 28. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
- 2 to a linking auction item, comprising:
- 3 encoding search information for one or more related auction items;
- 4 embedding the encoded search information into a pointer to a facilitating server, the
- 5 linking auction item and the one or more related auction items being items available by the same
- 6 seller;
- 7 embedding said pointer in an item description of the linking auction item;
- 8 upon selection of the linking auction item at the auction site by a user, receiving the
- 9 encoded search information embedded in the pointer to the facilitating server;
- 10 automatically decoding the encoded search information embedded in said pointer into a
- 11 keyword; and
- 12 invoking a search engine of the auction site with the keyword as a search parameter to
- 13 find and present to the user item documents for the one or more related auction items.

1 29. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 28, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 30. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 28, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 31. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 28, wherein the encoded search
2 information is ASCII-coded.

1 32. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:

3 embedding an HTML tag into a document on the auction site, the auction site document
4 describing the linking auction item, and the linking auction item and the one or more related
5 auction items having a common seller;

6 upon selection of the linking item at the auction site by a user, receiving and interpreting
7 the embedded HTML tag;

8 causing, in response to the interpreted HTML tag, the user to be presented with an in-line
9 frame and a list of keywords displayed therein, the keywords obtained from a facilitating server;

10 receiving a selection by the user of one of the keywords in the list; and

11 in response to the selection, invoking a search engine of the auction site using the
12 selected keyword as a search parameter to find and present to the user item documents for the
13 one or more related auction items.

1 33. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 32, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 34. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 32, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 35. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:
3 upon finding an item document by a user at the auction site, the item document
4 describing a linking auction item, receiving a command to perform a background search by a
5 facilitating server in response to the found item document, the background search being directed
6 to find one or more auction items related to the linking auction item;
7 presenting to the user a list of links to any items found by the background search;
8 receiving a selection by the user of one of the links from the list; and
9 in response to the selection, invoking a search engine of the auction site to find and
10 present to the user item documents for the one or more related auction items.

1 36. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 35, further comprising the step of filtering
2 the list of links according to a pre-determined criterion, wherein the pre-determined criterion is
3 that the one or more related auction items have the same seller as the linking auction item.

1 37. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 35, further comprising the step of filtering
2 the list of links according to a pre-determined criterion, wherein the pre-determined criterion is
3 that the one or more related auction items have the same seller as the linking auction item and
4 specified auction starting and ending times.

1 38. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 35, wherein the background search is
2 performed based on criteria submitted by the user to the facilitating server.

1 39. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 35, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 40. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 35, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 41. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:

3 encrypting search information for the one or more related auction items;

4 embedding the encrypted search information for the one or more related auction items
5 into a pointer to a facilitating server, the linking auction item and the one or more related auction
6 items being items available by the same seller;

7 embedding said pointer in an item description of the linking auction item;

8 upon selection of the linking item at the auction site by a user, receiving the encrypted
9 search information embedded in the pointer to the facilitating server;

10 automatically decrypting the encrypted search information embedded in said pointer into
11 item description information of the one or more related auction items; and

12 invoking a search engine of the auction site with the description information as search
13 parameters to find and present to the user item documents for the one or more related auction
14 items.

1 42. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:

3 forming a delimited keyword by separating one or more characters of a keyword by one
4 or more delimiters;

5 embedding the delimited keyword into a pointer to a facilitating server, wherein the
6 linking auction item and the one or more related auction items are items available by the same
7 seller;

8 embedding said pointer in an item description of the linking auction item, wherein the
9 delimited keyword prevents a search engine of the auction site from finding the keyword in the
10 item description when a search at the auction site is conducted;

11 upon selection of the linking auction item by the user at the auction site, receiving the
12 delimited keyword at the facilitating server;

13 automatically removing any delimiters from the delimited keyword to recover the
14 keyword; and

15 invoking a search engine of the auction site with the recovered keyword as a search
16 parameter to find and present to the user item documents for the one or more related auction
17 items.

1 43. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 42, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 44. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 42, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 45. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:

3 embedding one or more keywords relating to one or more related auction items into a
4 linking auction item's description, wherein the linking auction item and the one or more related
5 auction items are items available by the same seller;

6 inserting said one or more keywords into a table residing in a facilitating server and
7 configured for storing keywords, wherein said table includes an associative link between each of
8 said one or more keywords in the table and one or more auction items at the auction site;

9 upon finding the linking action item at the auction site by a user, retrieving the table of
10 keywords from the facilitating server;

11 presenting to the user the keywords in the table along with description data of the linking
12 auction item; and

13 upon selection of one of the displayed keywords by the user, invoking a search engine of
14 the auction site with the keyword as a search parameter to find and present to the user item
15 documents for the one or more related auction items.

1 46. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 45, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 47. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 45, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 48. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:

3 embedding one or more keywords into a protected area of a document describing a
4 linking auction item, wherein the linking auction item and the one or more related auction items
5 are items available by the same seller, and a search engine at the auction site is configured to
6 ignore information in the protected area;

7 inserting said one or more keywords into a table residing in a facilitating server and
8 configured for storing keywords;

9 upon finding the linking auction item at the auction site by the user, retrieving the table of
10 keywords stored on the facilitating server;

11 presenting to the user the keywords in the table along with the description data of the
12 linking auction item; and

13 upon selection of one of the displayed keywords by the user at the auction site, invoking
14 a search engine of the auction site with the keyword as a search parameter to find and present to
15 the user item documents for the one or more related auction items.

1 49. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 48, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 50. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 48, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 51. (New) A method of presenting to a user on an auction site one or more auction items related
2 to a linking auction item, comprising:

3 embedding a pointer in an item description of a linking auction item, the item description
4 when accessed at the auction site causing an access to a facilitating server by means of the

5 embedded pointer, the linking auction item and the one or more related auction items being items
6 available by the same seller;
7 upon accessing the item description having the embedded pointer, obtaining at the
8 facilitating server a list of item descriptions and item numbers that represent the currently active
9 auctions of the seller; and
10 presenting to the user the list of the seller's currently active auction items.

1 52. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51,
2 further comprising, upon selection of the linking auction item at the auction site by a
3 user, generating a pop-up window to the user; and
4 wherein the list of currently active auction items of the seller is presented in the pop-up
5 window.

1 53. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 52, wherein the pop-up window is
2 displayed over a Web page containing the item description from the auction site.

1 54. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, wherein the list is automatically
2 updated by the facilitating server to show only the currently active auctions.

1 55. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with the auction site.

1 56. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, wherein the facilitating server is
2 associated with an auxiliary site accessible on the Internet.

1 57. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, wherein the list obtained from the
2 facilitating server includes keywords relating to the one or more related items.

1 58. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, further comprising, upon selection by
2 the user at the auction site of one of the items in the presented list, invoking a search engine of
3 the auction site to find and present to the user an item document for the selected item.

1 59. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, wherein the pointer is a URL.

1 60. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51, wherein the step of obtaining a list of
2 item descriptions and item numbers is performed by the facilitating server executing the code
3 residing at the facilitating server.

1 61. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 51,
2 wherein the item description of the linking item includes embedded executable code; and
3 wherein the step of obtaining a list of item descriptions and item numbers is performed
4 by the facilitating server executing the code embedded in the linking item description.

1 62. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 61, wherein the executable code is Java
2 code.

1 63. (New) A method of presenting, as recited in claim 61, wherein the executable code is Java
2 Script.